

A partisan affair: Mapping patronage in municipal bureaucracies of Brazil

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Abstract

How extensive is patronage in Brazil? What are the differences in observables between partisan affiliates and non-partisan members? Leveraging a novel dataset of partisan affiliation and employment data on every municipal bureaucrat in Brazil, I find that party members are more likely to be overcompensated than their peers, concentrating in areas of executive leadership, while being less educated than their peers. In addition, their employment spells tend to be more durable over time, leading to negative consequences. These findings provide raise important questions regarding the duration of partisan ties and its consequences for local bureaucracies.

1 Introduction

Who benefits from patronage? And what are its consequences for local administration?

Literature on patronage and selection: Robinson and Verdier (2013). Extant literature on selection of public officials have primarily focused on who becomes a politician Dal Bó et al. (2017). There remains unanswered questions regarding who enters the bureaucracy, what types of employment they held, and what are the differential compensations among public officials.

In this paper, I leverage micro-level partisan information with employment data to assess the degree to which there are differential compensation structures and differences in observables among partisan and non-partisan. What I find is that the benefits of public sector employment do not accrue to poorer voters. Rather, what we see in Brazil is the accumulation of the benefits of public employment to a wealthier class of party members. Positions at higher levels of government such as executive leadership and administration are mostly allocated to party members. In contrast, less profitable offices in frontline services are less partisan.

Additionally, party members are concentrated in tenured positions. Over X% of career bureaucrats are affiliated to a party. Party members tend to stay in the bureaucracy for longer, and receive a higher compensation than their non-partisan counterparts.

Patronage in the allocation of public sector jobs

2 Context and Data

3 Empirical strategy

4 Conclusion

References

- Dal Bó, Ernesto, Frederico Finan, Olle Folke, Torsten Persson and Johanna Rickne. 2017. “Who becomes a politician?” *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 132(4):1877–1914.
- Robinson, James A and Thierry Verdier. 2013. “The political economy of clientelism.” *The Scandinavian Journal of Economics* 115(2):260–291.